

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge the allowance of Claim 24, as indicated at paragraph 4 of the Office Action.

Applicants further acknowledge that this application is currently under final rejection. Accordingly, a Request for Continued Examination is being filed concurrently herewith, and Applicants request that further prosecution of this application be conducted taking the foregoing amendment into account.

Claims 27 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph based on the lack of an antecedent basis for the phrase "said composite oxide" in the last line thereof. In response to this ground of rejection, Applicants have amended Claim 27 to include such an antecedent basis by incorporating therein the final paragraph of Claim 24. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 19-21, 23, 25, 26, 28 and 29 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph on the ground that there is no description support for the specified range of "from 0.20 to 3.5 grams per 100 grams" of Pd, Ir and Ru. In response to this ground of rejection, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to specify a range of 0.25 to 3 (which is supported in the specification at page 8, lines 20 and 21, as referred to by the Examiner). In this regard, Applicants note

that Claims 5 and 22 already are limited to the latter range. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-5, 19-23, 25, 26, 28 and 29 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over International Patent Document WO 97/47864. In response to this ground of rejection, Applicants have amended each of Claims 1, 5, 22 and 27 to incorporate a limitation corresponding to the last paragraph of Claim 24, which has been allowed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the independent claims which remain of record in this application is now allowable, as are the dependent claims which depend therefrom.

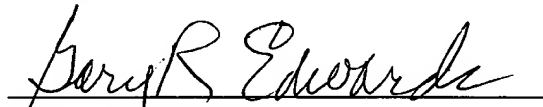
In light of the foregoing remarks, this application should be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and

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please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit
Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #381NP/48511).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Gary R. Edwards", written over a horizontal line.

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